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Angler: Troy Marien

Fish: Tuna

Lure: ZMan 5" StreakZ Bubble Gum

Jighead: TT Lures HeadlockZ HD 5/0



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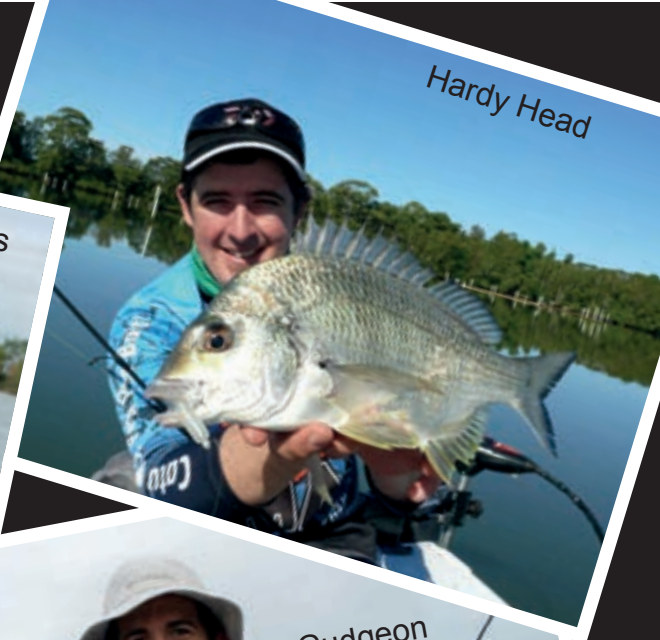


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NEW GEAR

ZMAN

THE SCIENCE & ART OF FISHING



We have had some exciting new gear arrive in time for this issue of the mag!

The ZMan 2.5" GrubZ now come in three exciting new colours - Gudgeon, Greasy Prawn and Hardy Head.



Gudgeon - a murky olive green, with a sprinkling of red glitter and black fleck, that has already fished well on bream in clear and dirty water, picked up a few other species including jew and is sure to make its mark in the fresh.



Greasy Prawn - a super natural colour, with a subtle mix of gold and copper glitter and black fleck, that has already proven deadly on bream and other species.



Hardy Head - a transparent, pearlescent body, combined with multi-coloured micro glitter make this plastic look extremely natural in the water. Already taking numbers of bream and sure to be deadly on anything feeding on hardy heads, whitebait, jelly prawns and micro bait.

After requests from anglers there has also been an addition to the ZMan 3" MinnowZ, with Baby Bass now available. This will be dynamite in the fresh and salt, especially where fish are feeding on gar, bony bream and other baitfish.



BLACKWOOD RIVER, WA

By Ash Hazell

Public holidays are always an exciting time for me. The extra day opens up a heap of new fishing options that are too far to bother with for a quick session or two. I like to get on the water and explore, systematically covering as much of the area as possible. I'm mostly a bream fisherman, so this usually involves exploring different parts of estuary systems, working my way up as far upstream as I have time for, to figure out what is happening in that system. Whether it is pre-fishing for a tournament or just a weekend away, I take this same approach to learn as much about a system as I can. This tests my assumptions and hopefully validates my predictions about how the fish are behaving. I like to look up what the weather has been in the area, paying special attention to rainfall, which can have a huge impact on the inhabitants of rivers and estuaries. This time the plan was to hit a South West river, the arena chosen for the WA ABT Qualifier round this year. There had been very little so I expected the bream to be spread out through the length of the river. 'The Wood' is a long, deep, timber lined river that is home to black bream and a plethora of by-catches.



Some Blackwood River locals and their snaggy home.

A couple of ZMan GrubZ that Ash has rigged for fishing snaggy areas. Being so soft and flexible the hook easily finds its mark when a fish strikes



It's known as one of the most challenging rivers in WA. This isn't due to a lack of bream, which are there in pretty good numbers, but the way they head for their snaggy homes as soon as they are hooked. You would swear they come out and then hit lures on their way back into their snag, often with unstoppable momentum against the ultra light lines used by serious bream anglers. There is a term called being 'wooded', which was coined on the Wood, and it's where you are busted off in a snag before you have a chance to react to a strike. It happens far too often but always provides a few laughs for the people you are fishing with.

Weedless rigging is a must in some stretches, if you don't want to lose your lure every six casts! Burying TT HWS jigheads deeper inside plastics or Texas rigging with standard jigheads is a good way to do this without missing too many strikes, like you can with dedicated weedless jigheads.

We got down there in the early afternoon and set up our campsite, which would be our home for a few days. With all that behind us, it was time for a few bream. I convinced my lovely wife to come out for a fish, convincing her that she would catch something (she's only fished once or twice). We went way up river because I like it up there, away from the skiers and 'once a year' anglers disturbing the peace.

Being a gentleman, I set Amanda up first with a 1/16oz TT head rigged with a Watermelon Red ZMan 2.5" GrubZ, before I rigged up a couple of my rods the same way. This is my 'go-to' deeper water pattern. By the time I had a leader tied, I heard drag peeling off and turned around to find Amanda playing tug of war with a hefty bream, that smashed the plastic as soon as it hit the water. It was trying its best to reach some nearby timber, knowing it would provide safety. The smooth drag on the Ecooda Synch did its part and slowed the bream down enough for her to get some line back in. She pretended not to be too happy with her catch, knowing I'd drag her out fishing more often, but this photo tells a different story.



‘She pretended not to be too happy with her catch, knowing I'd drag her out fishing more often, but this photo tells a different story.’



The next morning, we started early with the plan of heading down to the 'ski area' before the hordes turned it into one big vortex. We found plenty of bream with 2.5" GrubZ and something I've been messing around with lately, cut-down ZMan 4" Finesse ShadZ. With these, I simply cut the flaps off from underneath with my braid scissors and shorten the length a little if they are short striking (tail grabbing). The thin profile helps them suck it right into their mouth for a good hook up.



Ash with a bream on a cut-down ZMan Finesse ShadZ

After covering a lot of the river on day two with my normal grubbing tactics, I wanted to explore and experiment a little on my final session. I tied on a backwards rigged, cut-down 3" Scented ShrimpZ on a light, 1/20oz, jighead and started lobbing it hard into timber. Drag locked and ready to strike, I knew I had to be fast to have any chance of winning the fights that would follow.

After only a couple of casts, it was time for a challenge. I was hit hard and the fish ran straight out of its snag, toward the boat. I thought I had it sorted at first but it kept going, straight toward another snag. This is when I realised it was the biggest bream I'd connected with all weekend. I ripped the rod to the side in an attempt to turn its head and continued to battle it right on the edge of no man's land. Finally getting it to the boat, I was very happy to photograph and release the solid 40cm+ black bream.

The time I spent on the river gave me a chance to cover most of the system and learn a few new things that I hope will help me out in the ABT event. But... as I write this heavy rain has started, so it's back to square one... bring it on!



Ash experimenting with a different method of cutting down and rigging the ZMan 3" Scented ShrimpZ... not a bad result!

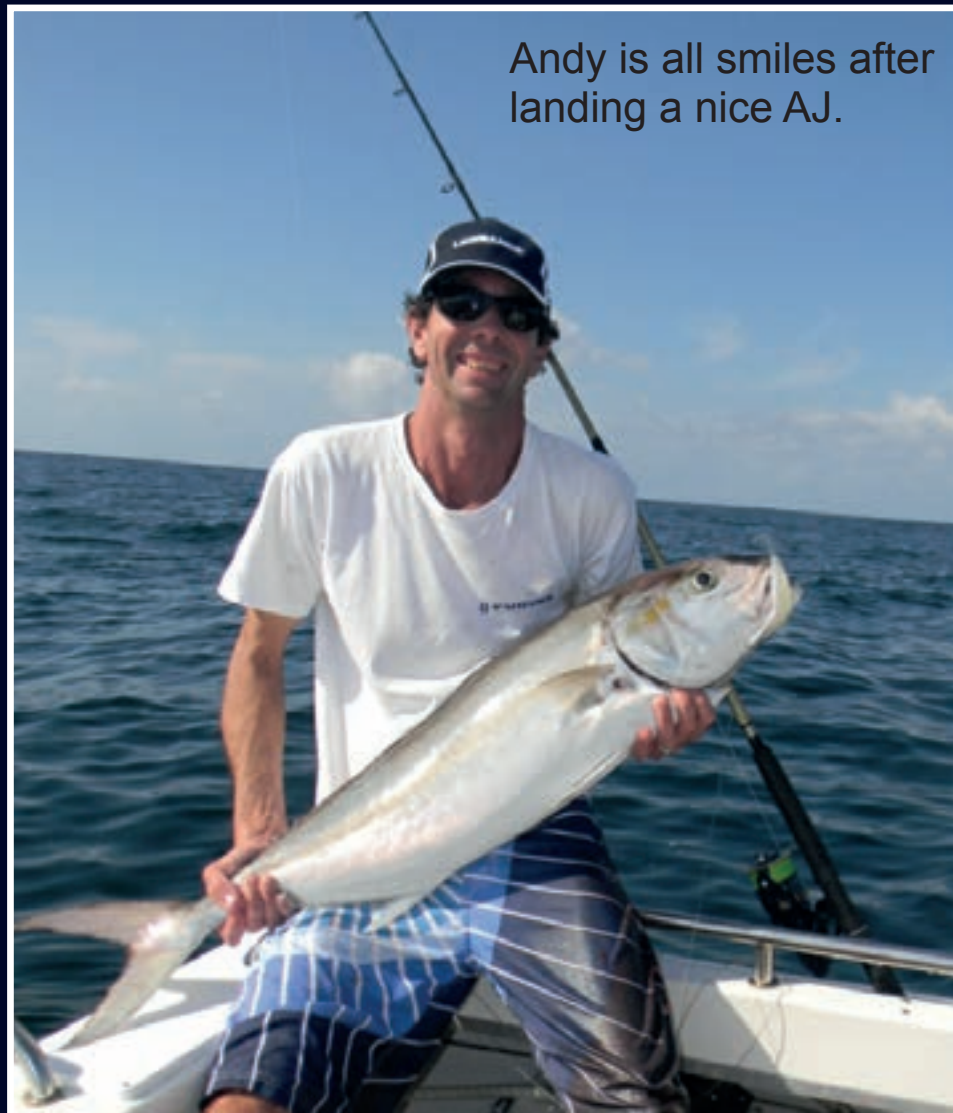
Flicking Soft Plastics off Fraser

By Andy Gunn

We were heading off Fraser Island to chase some reefies and not being able to pass up an opportunity like this I loaded in the plastics rods and a selection of ZMan to see what I could get to eat them.

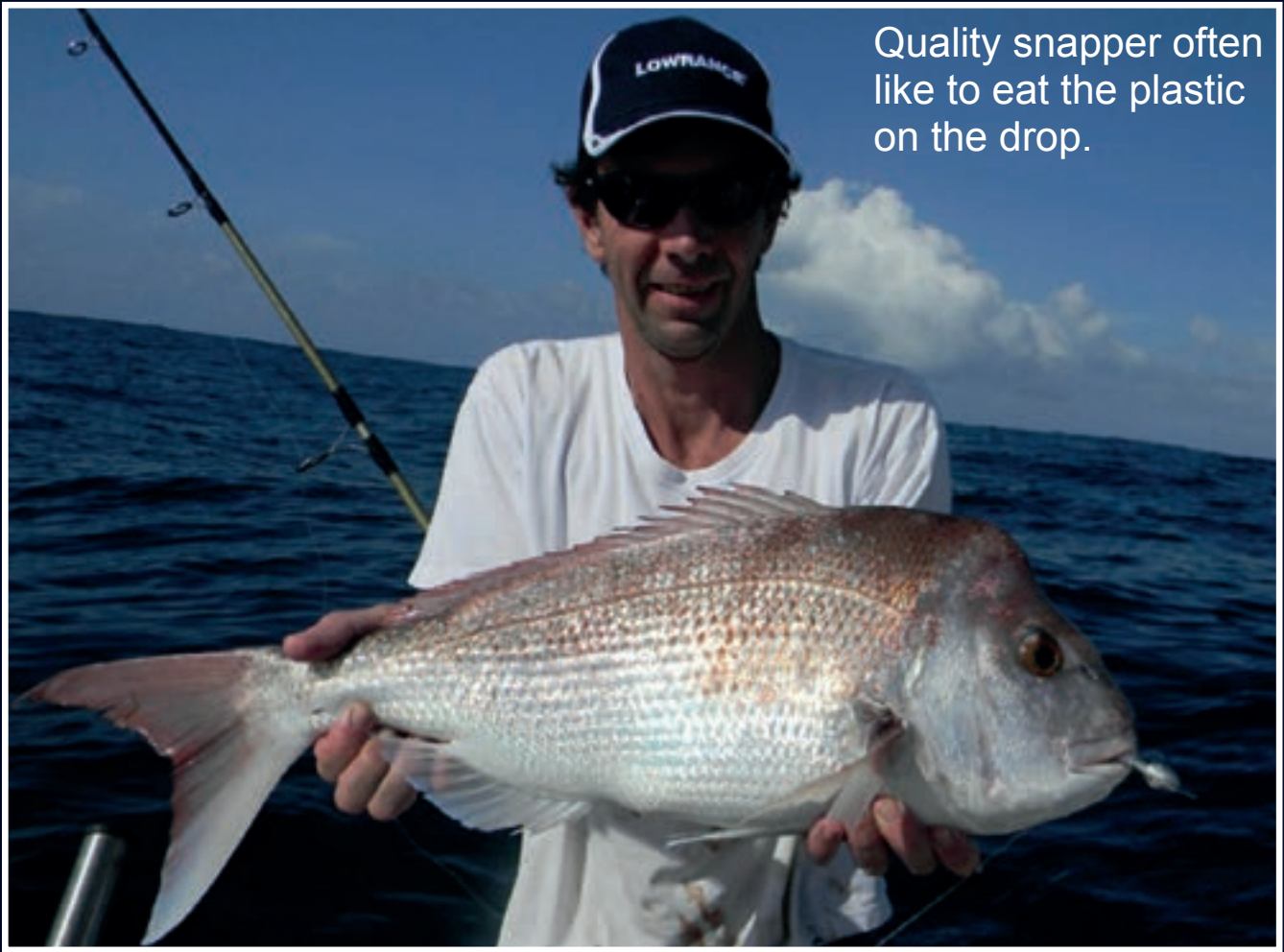
After a fairly comfortable run out to our mark, we had anchored the boat over some good structure in around fifty metres of water. The first rod of choice was a 15–24kg Gold Texalium matched with a Shimano Thunnus 12000 reel and spooled with 50lb Sunline Super PE. On this I rigged an 8” ZMan StreakZ XL in Opening Night colour, matched to a TT Lures 1oz jighead. I selected this size jighead so that I could work the entire water column where I could see the fish were sitting on the sounder. This was possible due to the fact that there wasn't a lot of current running.

Feeding the line down through your fingers allows you to stay in contact with the plastic on the drop, as a lot of times the fish will take the plastics as it drops. Once the plastic hits the bottom I work them up with an erratic retrieve imitating a wounded bait fish fleeing from the predatory species. Although sometimes just a fast wind can work also. As I was working the plastic up from the bottom the rod buckled over. Something had come through and grabbed the plastic and it looked like it had ambitions of getting back to the bottom! After a few anxious moments and some heart stopping runs, I had the fish's head coming up, although at one stage the fish had spotted the anchor and tried to wrap around that as well. Keeping constant pressure on the fish with a lift and wind down, I was able to get the fish to the boat and was both surprised and pleased when I saw the amberjack at the boat.



Andy is all smiles after landing a nice AJ.

The next drop down was a different hit, as the fish had hit the plastic on the drop and had a couple of good runs but tired more quickly than the previous fish. Again slow lifts of the rod tip and constant pressure had the fish on the way to the boat and before long I had a nice 73cm snapper boat side.



Quality snapper often like to eat the plastic on the drop.

After getting a few smaller fish I decided to downsize outfits as well as plastics. I dropped down to a Shimano Terez rod, matched with a 6000 size Baitrunner and spooled with 30lb braid. The plastic I chose was a ZMan StreakZ 5" in Redbone Glow and yes, as always happens, something big decided to eat the plastic and after a short hard run the fight was over and the fish had won its freedom.

After re-rigging and sending the ZMan back down, I found that I was getting the best result keeping the plastic close to the bottom, with small sharp flicks of the rod tip imitating a wounded baitfish. Before long the rod loaded up again, with what felt like a good fish and after a short fight I was pleased to see a 48cm Moses perch come to the boat. This was my first trip off Fraser Island throwing ZMan soft plastics and I had PB's for 2 species!



NT Adventure Pt.2

By Ben Deneen



Part way through my tour of duty in Gove, NT, things were going quite nicely. We were making good progress chipping away at our projects and we were consistently being spoilt by some of the best land based fishing Australia has to offer. It was about then that the old saying “something’s only worth what someone’s willing to pay” finally worked in my favour! One of the boys from the crew picked up a 4m tinny and a clunky old 25hp two-stroke Johnson on a trailer for the grand total of 500 bucks, and it floated! After couple of afternoons on the tools around camp, a few beers and some bush mechanics, we had the old Johnno singing like a bird!

Saturday afternoon finally came around and had us chomping at the bit! A locally based work colleague, with quite the fishing reputation, was kind enough to part with a couple of GPS points within reach of our modest fishing platform. Although nothing flash, they would be somewhere to start. Armed also with his portable sounder and handheld GPS, we set off towards the bright lights of the ship loader in search of some livies. The squid jigs turned out to be a complete waste of time, our only luck coming in the form of a dozen or so herring that fell to our one and only bait jig. As we didn’t plan on being out all night, a dozen would do.

A quality coral trout that crunched
a ZMan 5" Scented Jerk ShadZ.



The short trip across Melville Harbour was quite pleasant, and before long we were nearing our first mark, an old trawler wreck sitting on the bottom in about 12m of water. Sure enough as we went over the mark a nice lump appeared on the sounder, so we set about dropping the anchor and drifting onto the spot. We soon found out our livies had become 'deadies,' but with no other option, the first baits were on their way down. They didn't last!

Soon after, the three of us were all fighting fish. As they hit the rotting timber deck, the sight of a black jew, a fingermark and a nannygai had us high-fiving and yahoing, not to mention our mouths watering! They weren't big fish by anyone's standards but we were just so happy our plan had come together successfully. The action did slow slightly over the next half hour but the fish kept ticking over, mainly nannys, until the bait bucket was empty and we headed back to camp.

During the following week we were given the heads up on a creek over the other side of the harbour that had a big rock bar out front and barra living on it. A Gove barramundi was on the to-do list for us all so it didn't take much for us to agree on our next trip. As the sun rose on the Sunday morning we found ourselves bumping across the bay with the trusty old two-stroke going flat stick. We'd been given rough directions on how to get there and we spent most of the morning poking in and out of shallow creeks looking for the one with an obvious rock bar out the front. Come ten o'clock, we only had a couple of queenies and little mangrove jacks to our names from a rocky point and we were all getting a bit sick of searching for this seemingly mythical creek. The decision was made to cast net some mullet around some mangrove fringes and head back to the wreck where we'd had success the weekend before.

Mackerel love to eat plastics,
lucky it's a ZMan so it's 10X
Tough!



A quality trout pinned on the TT Lures 1/2oz 5/0H jighead rigged with a ZMan 5" StreakZ.



Before long we were anchored up on the spot and the boys were rigged and ready. Being more traditional bait fishos they were right at home, but I was keen to try something different. I rummaged through my tackle bag and found a handful of TT jigheads and the scraps of what used to be a healthy collection of ZMan plastics. The first jigheads I decided to put into action were the 3/8oz TT Rev Heads. They had worked well before on impoundment bass and I thought the extra flash and vibration of the gold Colorado blade could only work in my favour. I matched them with ZMan 3" MinnowZ and they were a hit! I easily went fish-for-fish with the bait boys, mainly on smallish nannys. With such limited supplies, I really began to appreciate the toughness of the ZMan tails! The same lures caught fish after fish until a snag and bust off forced me to go looking for some other options!

The only heads I had left were standard TT 1/2oz 5/0Hs, so I threaded on a 5" ZMan StreakZ in 'Bubble Gum' and was back in action. I figured the heavier head and faster sink rate would create a slightly less natural presentation. To try and combat this, once the plastic reached the bottom I would lift it about a metre, then dead-stick it with the odd shake thrown in, much like I would of done drifting the deep waters of the Tweed chasing bream, only on a bigger scale. It didn't take long before I was punching well above my weight against a fish stronger than any I'd hooked all day. After a battle that went back and forth numerous times, a beautiful coral trout slid into the net and was easily fish of the day at 66cm.

I seriously considered calling it a day. I have a habit of doing that, packing up and ending the day's fishing on a good note! But the other boys had a couple of baits left so I went back for another drop. After snagging and losing my last Bubble Gum StreakZ, I decided to try the Electric Chicken colour. It went down hanging off another 1/2oz jighead. Fishing it in the same style as mentioned before, it got eaten first lift! This felt like another good fish but I unfortunately went too hard and pulled the hook. When there are fish like coral trout around, it's go hard or go home! A couple of drops later I hooked up again and after a speedy first run and a fairly clean fight, we were all surprised to see a nice little Spaniard come boat side. Luckily it was pinned perfectly in the top lip, no doubt the only reason it was landed on a 15kg fluorocarbon leader.

With the boys out of baits, I was more than happy to head for the ramp. It was really starting to warm up, we were all a bit peckish and lunch at the camp finished at 1!

At the camp BBQs that night, over a couple of beers and some fresh jewie and trout fillets, we got to wondering about the quality of fish out there for the blokes with big boats. If we could pull quality fish from a well known wreck, less than a kilometre from the ramp, imagine some of the beasts lurking out wider! The local stories and photo boards do give us some idea but its hard not to dream about being out there yourself, locked up to a metre long fingermark, or struggling to get a bait through a school of Spaniards in order to hook a big red! It truly is a magical part of the world and somewhere I certainly would recommend to anybody if given the chance!



Grubby TacticZ

By David Brace



With the latest release of new colours, Glow and Copper Penny, in the ZMan 5" GrubZ range, I thought it would be fitting to take a look at the entire range of ZMan GrubZ under the microscope. At the time of writing ZMan's range of GrubZ consists of a 2.5", 5" and the larger 9" model. The whole GrubZ range comes in a variety of colours to target Australia's premier freshwater native sportfish, along with smaller estuarine table fish, pelagics and many reef fish in the rusty water.

With the use of TT Lures' wide range of jigheads, the GrubZ are an extremely versatile lure that can be rigged for all occasions and conditions. By changing jighead styles and weights, the GrubZ are transformed into imitation bait that is too irresistible for fish to resist. Being able to swim the lure weedless, using TT Lures Snake Heads and Snagless Weight System (SWS) jigheads, allows you to fish effectively amongst dense structure.

This lure presentation is dynamite for coaxing ambush predators from the comfort of their lair. Being presented in this manner and skimmed across the surface on the retrieve, the GrubZ can also make a fantastic surface lure. The lure takes on the life of a small insect or a lizard skittering across the surface.

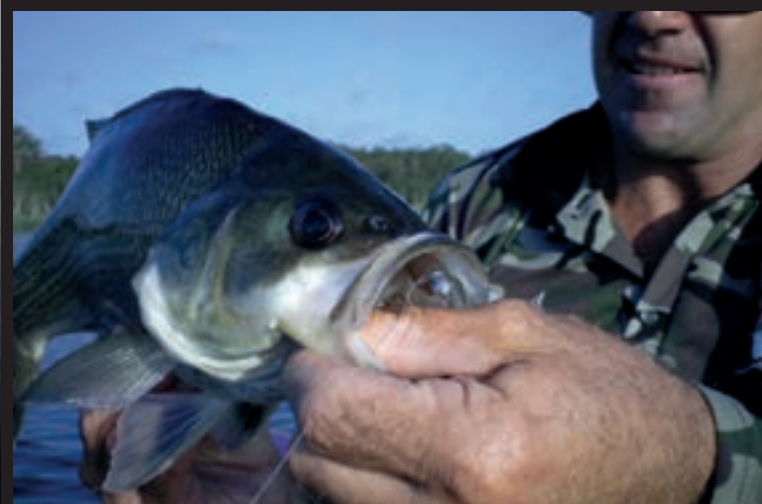
When fishing in areas of strong tidal movement, heavier weighted TT jigheads can be used, especially in deeper water, to get the GrubZ into the strike zone more efficiently and keep it in that optimum zone for longer periods, increasing fish strikes. On the other end of the scale, especially when finessing the smaller 2.5" GrubZ, lighter weighted jigheads are required for bouncing the lure over grassy weed beds and shallow structure, or when just letting the lure flutter down amongst the school of fish in deeper water. On many occasions a fish will strike the lure as it ripples down slowly on the drop and this can be a very effective technique, especially around pontoons, jetties, mangrove edges and other structure.



The GrubZ have a cylindrical body with a curly tail that sends very subtle vibrations through the water column, similar to an injured baitfish. The lure presentation also appears extremely lifelike, representing baitfish of all sizes across the GrubZ range. Due to the shape of the GrubZ they can also be used in a very different way, especially when targeting Australian native freshwater species such as Australian bass, golden perch, murray cod and barramundi. TT Lures have a sensational range of Spinnerbaits, the smaller Vortex, the medium size Striker and the larger Tornado Spinnerbait, along with the ZMan range of Chatterbaits; all constructed from quality components.

These Spinnerbait and Chatterbait lures take on a whole new appearance when the ZMan GrubZ is used as a trailer. By adding the GrubZ to the hook and sliding it up under the silicone skirt of these lures, the Spinnerbait and Chatterbait profile is increased, along with the action and they make a deadly combination, attracting these feisty, hard brawling fish.

To assist the GrubZ in staying steadfast on the shank of the Spinnerbait and Chatterbait hook, a small dab of super glue on the hook shank can be utilised before sliding the GrubZ into position, to lock it in place. The 2.5" GrubZ are ideal for the smaller Vortex Spinnerbait and the Mini Chatterbait, while the 5" range of GrubZ fit well on the rest of TT Lures Spinnerbait range and ZMan's Original 3/8oz Chatterbait.



Just recently I experienced some unbelievable fishing, targeting Australian bass in my local area using the 2.5" GrubZ and the 9" GrubZ was particularly deadly on impoundment barra in north Queensland, with some extremely memorable fish landed. Other members of the Tackle Tactics Team have also been targeting a variety of fish species using the ZMan GrubZ in all sizes and colours, in both the sweet and rusty water, with overwhelming results. So next time you are thinking of getting your hands dirty chasing your chosen species of fish, THINK GRUBZ!



Dave with a solid impoundment barra on a ZMan 9" GrubZ fished weedless on a TT Lures Snake Head jighead.



Backpackin',

Bream

By Cameron Cronin

Throughout the last ten years, bream fishing has constantly and rapidly evolved into its current form as a multimillion dollar industry. With this evolution, there has been a noticeable shift in the way we target bream, with most serious bream anglers now deciding to fish from a dedicated watercraft of some kind, be it a boat or kayak.

While vessels like these are a pleasure to fish from, it is easy to forget that some great bream fishing can still be comfortably and easily accessed with two feet planted firmly on dry land. While land based fishing can be a very refreshing and down to earth style of targeting bream, those wishing to start doing it on a regular basis may need to change a few things in their approach. In this article I will briefly run over the locations I find work best for targeting bream from the shore and the gear I use to catch them , as well as sharing a few of the small tips and tricks that I have picked up over the years that have helped me catch more fish.



Land based bream can be targeted right in the middle of population centres.



Manmade structure:

Over the years our once pristine waterways have gradually succumb to human development, with boats, pylons, pontoons, rock walls, marinas, retaining walls and bridges all pockmarking many of our local systems. While these may not be great to look at, the good news is that they do offer some fantastic opportunities for those looking at hooking into a few bream from the shore.

When I plan a day fishing manmade structure, I often hit up Google Earth the night before and pick a stretch of bank that I hope to fish the next day. When choosing a stretch, I try to select an area where I can fish as many different types of structure as possible, maximising my opportunities of landing a few fish... just in case one area doesn't fire.

When doing this type of fishing I cannot stress how important it is to arrive at the spot you plan to fish as early as possible, with first light being the time I usually aim for. At this time of the day I have found that even the biggest of bream seem to throw caution to the wind, often rising up high in the water column to feed off the growth on various pieces of structure. This can produce some very exciting sight fishing possibilities and take it from me, seeing a big blue nosed bream slurp down your offering in plain sight will leave you weak at the knees!

Almost every area has some very different types of structure and it is hard for me to go into specifics on lure retrievals and selections, although a small soft plastic such as the ZMan 2.5" GrubZ rigged on a 1/20oz - 1/12oz TT Lures Hidden Weight System Jighead will rarely let you down. As long as you allow your plastic to sink tight to the structure you have chosen to fish, until it hits the bottom, you should be in with a chance of landing a few bream.



The slow sink of a TT Lures HWS jighead rigged with a ZMan 2.5" GrubZ makes for a deadly presentation when fishing structure.

Sand Flats:

If you are prepared to get your feet wet, wading sand flats can be another excellent option for those wishing to land a few bream. Sand flats are perhaps the simplest of any form of structure to fish for bream and are where I personally taught myself to bream fish. Depending on where you live flats may vary in size and features, although typically they will include a stretch of thick weed with patchy sand close to the shore, before gradually changing to sand before dropping off into deeper water.

Fishing the flats for bream isn't really too complex and good results can often be easily achieved by blindly firing out casts in all directions. You can improve your results though by searching for underwater features such as subtle changes in depth, a drop off into deeper water or sandy patches on a weedy bottom. Because flats are often so featureless, it is often these seemingly insignificant little things that will be holding most of the fish.

As far as lures and retrieves go, I really like small crank baits, under 40mm, although in most of my local systems weed will often become too thick to use these trebled lures and this is when I make the switch to a grub tailed plastic, such as the ZMan 2.5" GrubZ and 4" StreakZ Curly TailZ. To work these lures all that is required is a twitch and pause retrieve, allowing the lure to settle on the bottom occasionally for a few seconds. Hits will come hard and fast, so be ready to set the hook at a moment's notice.



Natural structure such as fallen timber, rocks, rubble, weed beds, flats and edges are all worth fishing.

Backwaters and creeks:

Usually located in the relatively secluded upper reaches of a system, creeks and backwaters can hold some red hot bream fishing options for those who are prepared to put in the hard yards to find them in the first place. Recently, I have discovered a couple of small backwater/creek systems almost completely cut off from the rest the estuary where although the fish are fairly small on average, the fishing is hot with the take being super aggressive and the fights very challenging around the snags on light gear. Sounds like fun? Well, it is!

Once again, Google Earth can be your best friend when looking for suitable creeks and backwaters, and by hovering at an altitude height of about one kilometre, you can cover a lot of ground without missing out on any potential spots. On a side note, just because a creek does not have an attached backwater (and the vast majority of them do not) that doesn't mean it isn't worth a flick. As a backwater is usually fed by a creek, I have put the two in the same category, although in reality the two are actually quite different. So while it can be great to fish two completely different areas in one session, you need to make sure you are equipped with gear capable of handling the bream living in both areas.



A solid bag of bream on the ZMan 2.5" GrubZ.

A couple of plastics for fishing the snaggy areas are a necessity, but recently I have really taken a shine to using the 1/12oz TT Lures Ghostblade when fishing in these areas. Not only do they seem to catch more fish, they definitely entice a much better class of bream, with 40+cm fish falling for these lures on a regular basis. To get the best out of your Ghosties I find a slow roll across shallow ground to be gun, although when the fish are shutdown, a quick lift and drop, allowing the lure to settle on the bottom for a second, really seems to fire them up.



Land based gear:

Although taking a truckload of gear is still achievable while fishing from the land, I can almost guarantee you will regret it after walking around with a heavy backpack for a couple of hours. So before you head out grab a medium to large sized tackle tray and load it with what you think you will need for that session.

Many boat anglers will make the mistake of loading their trays with all sorts of different lures 'just in case'... while singly they may not weigh very much, you will be surprised at how much heavier a once reasonably light backpack may feel by the end of the day!

The majority of the time, when you are land based fishing, you will only be able to carry one rod and reel combo with you at a time, meaning it is important to choose something as versatile as possible. For me this means taking a small, 2000 sized reel, loaded with 3-6lb braid tied to a 4-6lb leader. Rod wise, I look for something light and crisp, usually leaning towards the heavier side of things. Personally, I love my 4-10lb Daiwa Black Label, although you may want to go for something a bit lighter if you tend to fish more open ground or aren't dealing with larger bream on a regular basis.

Fishing gear isn't the only thing you should bring along though, with sturdy shoes, food and water, sunscreen, a raincoat, camera and polarised sunnies all being regular contents in my backpack.

So next time you get that bream itch, why don't you give land based breaming a go? With a bit of persistence it can be surprising to find that some of your best bream options were right at your feet!



A nice bream pinned on a TT Lures HWS (Hidden Weight System) jighead, rigged with a ZMan 2.5" GrubZ in Bloodworm.

Grass KickerZ Guide

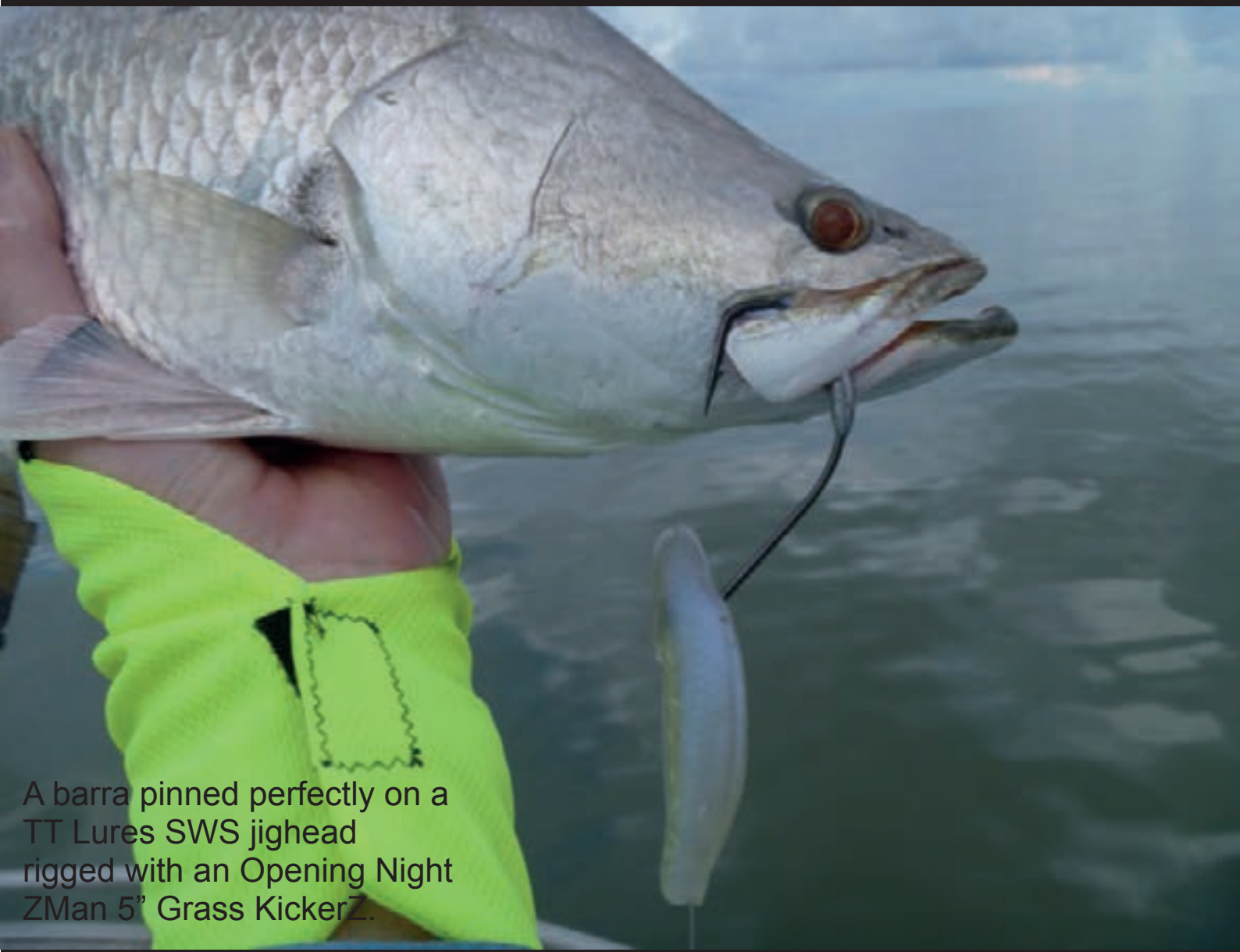
By Richard Quincey

Well, how good are the Grass KickerZ?



I have been using these 5" ZMan plastics in North Queensland on barramundi for about a year now with great results and my recent two trips propelled them way up my soft plastic favourites list with a personal best on two species, a 53cm mangrove jack and my first metre saltwater barramundi.

I like to fish the Grass KickerZ paired with either the TT Lures SWS (Snagless Weight System) or Snake Head jighead, as they are both extremely snag resistant. This allows me to get them deep into the timber or mangrove prop roots. To make them as snag resistant as possible, it is important to rig them carefully, so that the hook lays nice and flat along the back of the plastic. Remember to add a micro dot of super glue up front on the locking bend to stop them sliding down the hook.



A barra pinned perfectly on a TT Lures SWS jighead rigged with an Opening Night ZMan 5" Grass KickerZ.

Back to my first metre barra...

I was fishing a deep, steep sloping and very heavily timbered stretch of creek mouth using a Grass KickerZ rigged on an 8/0 Snake Head in 1/4oz. The tides were neap and I had the boat in close to the bank, held steady with the electric motor. Casting long, up current, I was fishing along the edge with a spin stick, 4000 spinning reel and 30 pound braid. Patiently, I waited for the lure to sink all the way to the bottom and when it touched down I lifted it a foot or so, slow and steady to help it slide over the timber that was regularly encountered on the retrieve. I find that the large, aggressive paddle tail on the Grass KickerZ creates a great action on even a slow lift. I let the lure sink again and continued this process all the way back to the boat. The lure hooked up a couple of times but they all came off when I was positioned on top of the snag.

It was a slow morning's fishing, in fact not a touch for about an hour. There were only a few fish showing on the sounder, but they were decent sized fish in a renowned big fish creek. After some perseverance, a long cast, one lift off the bottom and then....BOOF! A big first run and heading mid-stream, yeah! This was followed by a second big run, still heading to open water. I was in pursuit to get the boat well away from the heavy timber.



Richard's first metre salty on a TT Lures Snake Head rigged with ZMan 5" Grass KickerZ.

A metre salty is the goal of many northern anglers.



Once clear I backed the drag off a bit and I had a great fight that included some more solid runs. I knew it was a big fish and I was ecstatic when I saw her emerge beside the boat for the first time. A couple more mandatory runs when she saw the boat and then I landed my first metre barramundi. At no time did she jump or come to the top to shake her head, with the 8/0 Snake Head jighead locked solidly in the corner of the mouth.

I like fishing with as light a weight as the tide and wind will allow, to give the plastic a slow natural decent and a natural look when the rod tip is given a flick. For this presentation I rig them on a TT Lures Snagless Weight System. While 6/0's work fine, experience with barra makes me lean to the 8/0 for a better hook up rate. I think the larger hook also adds a great body roll on a slow retrieve.

It was a Pearl Grass KickerZ rigged on an 8/0 SWS that accounted for my other recent personal best, a 53 cm mangrove jack. I was fishing along a mangrove lined creek bank, casting into the edge of the timber. With the lightly weighted SWS it took a little while to sink all the way to the bottom.

With this fish all that was required was a nice tight cast and the willingness to let it sink without interference. Then whack and a solid run toward cover. I made a quick decision to stop the spool with my thumb and pulled the first run up just as the jack nudged a snag. It was enough to turn its head away from the structure and steer it back out away from danger and into deeper water.

2013 has certainly started out well thanks to the ZMan Grass Kickerz and TT jigheads. I am hoping it continues that way!



Richard's PB jack on a ZMan 5" Grass KickerZ in Pearl rigged on a TT Lures SWS jighead.



Angler Profile

Taylor
McKinney



Welcome to our angler profile section of the mag where we catch up with someone who excels in another sport, while still sharing our love of fishing. In this issue we catch up with Taylor McKinney.

You are a keen fisho, but tell the readers a bit about the other sport you are into.

Well I am a professional scooter rider... no not those mopeds you see in the city, the push scooters like your son's or daughter's, just a lot stronger. I have been riding seriously for about nine years now and have a job working inside a scooter shop, that's inside a skate park, selling/fixing them... so it's the second best thing from my dream job, haha!

What are some of the scooter results / highlights so far?

Probably my biggest highlight so far was last year when I went on a weeklong European tour just riding, doing demos and entering comps. I placed 1st in the Czech republic, 1st in Austria, 2nd in Switzerland and 2nd in Finland, collecting a decent amount of prize's and prize money. Another highlight was also landing three world first's during the trip - 1080 over a box jump, 360 backflip over a box jump ... then the very next go I landed a 360 backflip no hander! Such a crazy feeling having an entire skate park, with about 200 people, going nuts because of you landing one trick!

How long have you been into fishing and what got you into the sport?

I was born into fishing. The entire side of my Dad's family are fisherman and I have been fishing my entire life. I am 19 now and I can still remember my first fish I caught with my dad, an Aussie bass that I caught on a saltwater yabbie at Hinze Dam on the Gold Coast.

What types of fishing are you into?

Definitely lure fishing for yellowbelly and cod. I don't get to do it as much as I wish but nothing beats it, whether it be trolling timber lures in the dams or casting spinnerbaits from my canoe in the rivers with my dad. I also love live baiting for jew and bull sharks in the Logan and Albert rivers and fishing for bass in the upper reaches of the same rivers.

What are some of your most memorable captures?

Apart from my first fish, my most memorable captures would have to be my first AND second 'big' Murray cod that I got on the same trip! The first one took a trolled lure at Glenlyon Dam around the famous 'caves' area, while the second fish I picked up after it took a swipe at my dad's lure right at the boat. I put in a quick cast behind dad's lure and bang on. The fish went 80 and 81 centimetres, not the biggest cod, but the biggest cod I have caught so far and I was pumped.



What species or locations are on your bucket list / to-do list?

Ahhhh, so many to name, but the three that really appeal to me are - hiking the gorge country of the New England region fishing for Murray cod; fishing the Murray River for monster cod and of course going on a Nomad charter... yeah that's a dream, but those GT's hitting poppers like trucks and dogtooth tuna that snap knife jigs in half, now that would be a trip of a lifetime!

Are there any TT / ZMan products that you have included in your kit and what do you use them for?

YEAP! Of course, the TT Lures Striker spinnerbaits in the 3/8 and 1/2 ounce size are my favourite spinnerbait for river cod and yellas. Also ZMan 4" StreakZ Curly TailZ in Motor Oil, rigged on Jig Spinners for bass in the upper reaches of my local river.

Do you think the sports go well together / balance each other?

Yeah they go perfect together. I ride an indoor park a lot so when the weather is no good I can still go ride all day and night. When the weather is good I can still get out and have a fish in the early morning, then go for a ride during the night. There really is a perfect balance.





If we came to a scooter event, what could we expect to see?

Everyone just throwing down things you would never expect to see done on a scooter. Comps get riders super pumped to ride hard and they have such a great vibe. If you are a spectator you will be surprised what can be done.

What are a couple of your favourite tricks and what do they involve?

Definitely 720's... which are two full spins in the one air. They feel so good, especially when you go as high as you can while trying to slow the spins right down. Also I love 'front scooter flips' which involves making the scooter do exactly that a front flip! While keeping one hand on, you throw the scooter with your outside hand and let the grip roll in your inside hand. They feel really nice.

Where can we see more of what you do?

Two places!

The first one is You Tube. All you have to do is search Taylor Smith micro 2012 (which is my most recent video) or Taylor Smith scooter (which is all of my past videos and others that I am also in).

Second is The ISA Australian Titles this year at GC Compound on the 21st and 22nd of June at Coomera, Gold Coast.



Thanks for your time Taylor, any sponsors or people you would like to give a shout out to?

First of all my mum and dad for supporting me for all these years and buying countless scooters and scooter parts, before I was sponsored, and also for putting up with all the bits of line and gear that get left throughout the house! Also to my boss Scott and manager Bryce from Scooter Hut for helping me out with riding and giving me the time off for fishing trips haha! My girlfriend Bobbie, for sitting at the skate park while I go out and ride for hours on end. Tom and Jenny from GC Compound, for letting me ride there for free for all the years and helping me out when I needed it and finally everyone who I have ridden with, especially World Number 3, Robbie Menzies, my best mate.

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